

Iowa Outdoors
Iowa Department of Natural Resources
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DEER HARVEST IN LINE WITH 2006, 2007

BOONE - Iowa deer hunters have reported harvesting more than 75,600 deer through Monday, including the weekend totals from the first shotgun deer season which ends Dec. 10. The reported harvest is in line with the 2006 and 2007 harvest totals over the same period. The second shotgun season is Dec. 13 through 21.

Currently, the buck harvest is running ahead of the doe harvest, like years past. The DNR has been encouraging hunters to harvest more does to help control the deer herd by setting special seasons and allowing the use of rifles in certain counties in southern Iowa.

Most of the southern two tiers of Iowa counties still have resident antlerless deer only licenses available for the January antlerless season.

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DEER HUNTERS ENCOURAGED TO BRUSH UP ON SAFETY TIPS

DES MOINES – Four deer hunting related injuries were reported during the weekend of first shotgun season, prompting state officials to encourage hunters to brush up on their safe hunting techniques.

“The number one cause of deer hunting related incidents in Iowa is shooting at running deer. Hunters become fixated on their target and forget to identify a safe

backstop and what is beyond their target,” said Megan Wisecup, recreational safety programs supervisor for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

Wisecup said hunters should keep the following safety items in mind.

- **Blaze Orange.** Make sure to at least have the minimum required amount of blaze orange on at all times. Hunters are to often mistaken for game when the appropriate clothing items are not worn. Brown jackets, hats, and pants are often mistaken by hunters for a deer. Remember, you want to be seen from all sides.
- **Plan your hunt, hunt your plan.** Know where all members of your hunting party are at, at all times. Be especially careful when hunting in heavily wooded areas or uneven terrains. It is easy for another hunter to be out of sight.
- **As cold weather settles in and hunters spend more time in their vehicles,** remember to keep the gun unloaded and cased at all times. It is easy for hunters to forget this important safety issue when moving from one location to another or simply sitting in the vehicle to warm up. The trigger of the firearm could easily get caught on an item in the vehicle causing it to discharge creating damage to the vehicle or injuring a person. One of the most common citations issued during deer season is having a loaded firearm or uncased firearm in the vehicle.
- **With the recent snowfall and dropping temperatures hunters need to remember to exercise caution when traversing the icy terrain from one hunting spot to another or when retrieving game.** Not only are hunters at risk for falling and discharging their firearm but it is also possible for hunters to fall and get an obstruction in their barrel. Keep the muzzle pointed in a safe direction and keep the safety on until ready to shoot. If at all possible unload the firearm when moving to a different location or while retrieving game.

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PHEASANTS HEADING FOR COVER

BOONE - Iowa pheasant hunters are turning to areas with more robust cover to find pheasants after the recent snow and blowing snow filled in road ditches and fence lines. Look for fields enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program, rows of conifers or shrubs located next to crop fields as places to be holding the most pheasants.

Todd Bogenschutz, upland wildlife biologist with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources said pheasant hunting has been good where the August bird counts were better including in north central and northwest Iowa, and more difficult in areas where the counts were lower, like in north east, east central, southeast, southwest and south central parts of the state.

The Iowa corn harvest is coming to a close in southern Iowa. Hunters should be looking for pheasants filling their crops in the morning and evening on waste grain in these fields. Iowa's pheasant season runs through Jan. 10, 2009.

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2009 LICENSES AVAILABLE DEC. 15

DES MOINES - Hunters and anglers may purchase their 2009 licenses beginning Dec. 15. Deer hunters with tags for the January antlerless-only season are required to purchase a new hunting license if they hunt after Jan. 10. The 2008 licenses are good through Jan. 10, 2009. Annual resident hunting and fishing license for 2009 will cost \$17.50 each, the same as in 2008.

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